

Unofficial Translation

Report upon my Visit to East Timor - January 1986

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In July 1973, before the war between the liberation movement Fretilin and the Portuguese administrators broke out, I visited Portugal's former colony East Timor for the first time. At the height of the quarrels the Republic of Indonesia intervened in this conflict, occupied this part of the island according to the former Council of Timorese, and tried to solve the conflict. However, this led to a harsh fight with the Fretilin liberation movement which increasingly oriented itself towards Marxism. Portugal's last governor and his officials had left the island beforehand and fled to Atauro.

Both armies engaged in violent actions. The civilian population had suffered mostly by these measures. In addition to the belligerent actions, difficulties of supply started to grow, thus, severe famine broke out in Timor's eastern part. This famine also caused the deaths of a great number of the population. It can be said that actually each family mourns for the loss of relatives who were killed during the conflict. Until today those victims are not forgotten. They have caused feelings of anxiety towards Indonesia, despite the fact that one never should blame only one side. In view of the tense situation on the island, Indonesia had imposed strict immigration regulations and practically had forbidden the entry to this new part of the country by foreigners as well as by their countrymen. After the reduction of the tensions these regulations were only imposed on foreigners. The Australians and the rest of the Western world complained about these

regulations. After my recent visit to East Timor I was able to understand the reasons for those measures to a certain extent. I will explain this later on. I have read the accusations against Indonesia by those organizations which stand up for respecting human rights; accordingly, I was able to draw a relevant program for my latest visit in East Timor. The Indonesian offices did not impose any restrictions on my program. I was able to organize it myself. I could change the program at short notice; my visits were not well prepared and I visited persons and institutions by surprise. Due to this, I was able to gain a more realistic view on today's situation.

Timor's administration has at its disposal a helicopter which enables them to visit all parts of the island. Without the kind permission of Timor's administration in Dili to use the helicopter they had, I would not have had the opportunity to visit so many places in such a short time because there are only few roads, actually only two. My special thanks to East Timor's Governor for his support because my visit was non official and I did not want to use the military helicopter. These kind of technical "obstacles" are another reason for restrictions on foreign visitors especially if they want to travel further than Dili.

Nowadays it is easy to reach East Timor. I flew by Garuda from Denpasar (Bali) via Kupang (West Timor). In 1973, this possibility did not yet exist. I had to use an adventurous road from Kupang to Dili. Komoro's airport contributed certainly to the country's development and to the improvement in terms of transport network.

When I visited East Timor, the Governor had been on Christmas vacation. Thus, I was not able to meet

him. Instead, I met the Secretary of the regional government. We held a broad discussion upon East Timor's recent situation. In the following paragraph I will enlist some statistical data which have been confirmed later by my colleagues especially by Father Locateli:

In 1985, the number of East Timor's population totaled 608,400 .

East Timor covers an area of 14,619 square km. The density of population amounts to 42 per square km. The total budget of 1985 which the regional government had at its disposal is as following:

Development Fund:	1,600,394,360 Rp.
The President's Development Fund:	1,519,935,000 Rp.
Provincial Budget:	43,000,000 Rp.
Expenses for the Health Sector:	3,550,329,000 Rp.
Expenses per capita:	5,335 Rp.

According to the Secretary of the regional government Fretilin is no longer capable of action. Fretilin is only operating as a band of robbers which is feared by the population and has cost the lives of 25 Indonesian soldiers in December. In Atunaka, Venilale, Cairui, Sare and Komoro, I interviewed villagers with the help of priests who enjoy the population's confidence, whether the Secretary's statement is correct. The priests and the villagers confirmed the statement: This band is feared because they not only robbed but also burned houses and/or killed people. When reporting to me, the individuals talked with a low voice and very discreet because they feared the band's revenge in respect to reports passed to foreigners. It was difficult to get answers to these questions in the city of Baucau because the band is feared by the people.

This was confirmed by Baucau's priest.

During my visit I have seen no malnutrition in the villages of the main island nor in Atauro or in Atauro's camp. According to my impression the problems of famine have been overcome due to the massive import of food from the rest of Indonesia. East Timor is not in a position to produce sufficient food for itself.

One Sunday, I visited Baucau's market: The variety of offers was even greater than in some other Indonesian provinces. It was quite busy at the market place. Items for daily use as well as food were offered sufficiently and could be afforded by the people. The clothes of the Timorese were simple but extremely clean. Their houses are simple but clean as well. They are all built in a style which is typical for the area. I choose the houses I wanted to visit. No restrictions had been imposed on me at all in respect to the houses I wanted to visit.

A major problem are the number of existing roads and the means of transportation because they are not yet sufficient for public transportation even though Indonesia had started to make these roads passable. In these efforts they were partly supported by Australian development aid especially in respect to the construction of bridges. However, the mobility of the people is low so that they do not travel much. They prefer to remain in the area of their villages and districts. I have the impression, that they do not mind this situation because they are used to it.

Another major problem is the support for orphanages. Most of them are supported by catholic communities. They not only take care of the orphans but also try to educate them. However, financial means to reach these goals are not sufficient. The Indonesian Catholic Church gave a lot of support as well as the Governor of the Province. This was confirmed by Father Locatelli.

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However, these orphanages, especially Venilale's orphanage, need additional support of foreign countries in order to overcome the problems they faced. Father Locateli urgently needs financial support to be able to maintain this orphanage in Venilale where 60 orphans live. So far, the Catholic Church had supported this orphanage. Recently, the Governor had to grant financial aid. East Timor's Catholic Church plays a key role in the development of this part of the island. The Apostolic Administrator of Dili, who is directly subordinated to the Papal State Secretary, is engaged in solving the problems of the Christians and in advising them to organize for the future. The primary task of the Church consists of pastoral service. This service should take especially the Christians' recent problems into consideration. Most of the families have not yet forgotten the civil war because many of their family members had been victims of the war. Thus, they are hesitant to accept new administrations especially the military. In this respect it is the priests' special task to create a reconciliation which is necessary in order to develop the country by peaceful means. With the Bishop's agreement it is tried very carefully to cooperate with the new administration in regard to the country's development. However, quarrels do appear. But nevertheless, solutions are found. In my opinion this kind of cooperation is the best way to help the Timorese. There are only 35 priests in the bishopric: they are not sufficient enough to support the people. In Europe, there exists a lack of young priests. In East Timor, there are sufficient young priests but there is a lack of financial support. During the Portuguese colonial time they were all educated in Portugal because the bishopric in East Timor was not able to financially support them, unless foreign missionaries were sent to East Timor. After being educated in

a preparatory seminar in Dili, today's students of theology are sent to a priest seminar in Central Java to be educated as priests. Soon, this system will enable local churches to increase the number of their priests. Priests will still play an important role in East Timor's further development. Thus, the support of Western churches is urgently needed. In a long discussion with young participants of this seminary I encouraged them to keep on studying dilligently in order to be able to advise the Christians not only in respect to religious fields but also in respect to improving their conditions of life. When getting in contact with their followers the young priests should also mention political facts, especially those efforts by the Administration which have been carried out already or are still being planned in order to improve the country's development. We realized that this would be very difficult for the young priests and their followers. But these kind of problems have been encountered and reasonably solved in other countries. I am convinced that these young priests will be capable of solving this difficult task in cooperation with their followers. I can only advise you to grant financial support because it would be a worthwhile investment for the development of the island and its inhabitants!

The education of East Timorese priests can not be compared with the one in Europe. However, activities of the East Timorese Church are impressive and convincing; the locals are strict followers and think positive in respect to their future.

Bishop Ximenes Belo knows how to advise his followers, how to integrate them; he is aware of the difficulties and confronts them in order to help overcoming the countries difficulties. In his role as a bishop he is very convincing. When attending a mass in Dili's Motael

Church and a Christmas reception in Dili, I had the impression that the followers do not resign but are rather optimistic. I was especially impressed by the development projects of the Church in Fatumaka, i.e. an educational center for young people which is also financially supported by the Governor of the Province, and of the new village community of Cairui, in the district of Manatuto. Volunteers from near by villages were settled in this new village in order to cultivate the fields cooperatively and to also increase the production, so they finally are able to support themselves independently. I had the impression that those people are very optimistic. My impression was confirmed by the local priests.

The Timorese did not make the impression of being afraid to be excluded from their religious activities. Bishop Belo also said that there would be no grounds for such kind of fear. On the contrary, both religious communities, i.e. Moslems and Christians, try to get closer. The Moslem minority, for example, abandoned the idea of building a big mosque in Dili. They did not want to scare the Christians of being converted by them. Thus, the Moslem minority group decided to build a more modest mosque in Bairro Pite instead which is located at the roadside to Komoro. This decision has been very wise and contributes to the building of mutual confidence and understanding among the different religious groups.

I promised Bishop Belo as well as Father Locateli to support their work and to engage in collecting financial help from the organisations of the church and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.

In my description of the island's development I would like to focus on East Timor's educational system and its health sector because they have a broad impact upon the Timorese's way of life.

The educational system has been completely underdeveloped under the Portuguese administration and the

rate of illiteracy was one of the highest in the world. In cooperation with the Catholic Church the Indonesian government started to change this situation. In order to change the conditions of life of the East Timorese, it is important to educate the young generation and to promote professional qualifications. Thus, tremendous efforts are being made to build schools in remote villages and to promote training of teachers. In order to independently educate their children, special emphasis is placed upon training locals to become teachers.

I have visited several Junior High Schools. Financially they are either supported by the Church or by the Government. I was impressed by the standard of education and the students' ability to master the English language. Especially the Catholic Junior High School "St. Paulus" in Dili can be quoted as being an exemplary representative of this educational standard. The Junior High Schools' students are extremely industrious and the teachers very ambitious, despite the fact that educational means are very scarce. The atmosphere in classes stimulates the students' motivation to learn more. However, East Timor's schools urgently need additional support in order to maintain their standard and to further improve their situation. Illiteracy has to be wiped out. This must be the aim of the Church and the Government!

I would also like to report upon an experience I have made in order to demonstrate the change of the army's attitude:

In the district of Baucau I have visited a very small school. The school was not informed about my visit at all. It had been a surprise visit and I was able to witness the real educational situation in this village. There are no professional teachers at this small school. Instead its students are being taught by two young army officers. They had been very surprised about a European visiting this remote place. They

seemed to be shy because they are not yet familiar with the professional field they have been entrusted with.

The army has experienced that it is not only important to maintain security but to help the people in developing the capability to support themselves. By granting this kind of support the army is able to gain the people's confidence. In this respect school plays a key role. I would like to encourage the local army leadership to continue this work with the same effort.

Furthermore, it needs to be mentioned that the army did not react by violent means to Fretilin's last attack in which soldiers had been killed. This kind of reaction contributes to decrease hatred and conflicts. The positive effect of peaceful reactions is well understood in East Timor. Thus, great importance is given to react with peaceful means. One of the most basic concerns of Timorese and of the Church is the lack of the Indonesian army's confidence in the civilian administration producing an imbalance of power on the island. Of course more confidence would be the best ways for the solution of the island's problems. Furthermore, an expansion and facilitation of possibilities to enter the island would demonstrate Indonesia's willingness to include East Timor into the development of the entire nation. In this context it has to be mentioned that all those in responsible positions do respect the big financial support which is granted by Indonesia in order to develop East Timor. East Timor is provided with more financial aid than any other Indonesian province. This support also demonstrates Indonesia's good will to improve the conditions of life in East Timor. However, in the near future difficulties in such cooperation will still appear because the military and the civilian administration are different from one another. But they are not only different in Indonesia. However, there is no problem which can not be solved by Indonesia or other Asian or Western countries.

The American Catholic-Relief Service's development in Sare, in the district of Ermera, is characteristic in the educational situation. In 1981, an agricultural farm was installed which was supposed to become a model for those farms in near by villages. In the beginning the project ran well. But soon it was realized that the locals had been simply overburdened: Within four years the "stone age" was supposed to be overcome by modern technology. There had been enough teachers and technicians but the locals were not in a position to transfer the knowledge, they had gained at the model farm, to their own local farms. Thus, CRS returned to more simple methods: Complicated technical machines were replaced again by animals such as the traditional water buffalo. These kind of methods are preferred even though it will take longer to reach the original goal. This experience which has also been made in other underdeveloped countries demonstrates that it is important to respect the situation and the capabilities of the people rather than imposing Western standards in order to be successful such kind of development projects. Luckily, those persons in charge of these projects have realized this important aspect and resist Western impatience. The approach of CRS's project is correct and useful!

Finally, I would like to present some statistical data, a comparison of the educational sector in East Timor from the year 1976 until the year 1985:

1. Number of Private and Governmental School Buildings:

- Elementary School : From 47 to 419.
- Junior High School: From 2 to 43.
- Senior High School: From 0 to 8.

2. Number of Pupils at the Private and Government Schools:

- Elementary School : From 13.501 to 100.637.
- Junior High School: From 315 to 1.576.
- Senior High School: From 0 to 2.694.

3. Number of Teachers at Private and Government Schools:

- Elementary School : From 499 to 2.614.
- Junior High School: From 10 to 570.
- Senior High School: From 0 to 133.

4. Review of the Distributions of Textbooks for Elementary Schools Distributed Freely in 13 Districts in East Timor (in 1985):

- Indonesian Language: 161.696.
- Pancasila Moral Teachings: 38.974.
- Mathematics: 42.499.
- Natural Science: 9.292.
- Social Science: 22.510.

The health sector has fundamentally changed as well: In 1973, I visited Dili's Central General Hospital. The hospital was very small and completely underdeveloped technically. At my recent visit I almost did not recognize the hospital! It had been extended and is provided with all important wards, with good technical means and medicine and even with a helicopter which transports sick people from all over the island to this hospital in emergencies. Dr. Hadi Marjanto Abednego, who has studied in the Federal Republic of Germany, is the local government's chairman of the health sector. He is extremely industrious, ambitious and not corrupt at all. He is actively engaged in the improvement of the medical supply of East Timor. Dr. Abednego and the Bishop are extremely outstanding personalities in East Timor. Dr. Abednego is also the promoter of this Central General Hospital. However, he also takes care of the supply of smaller hospitals on the island. He has also built up a health system which takes better care of the population than in any other region of Indonesia. Due to the annual rotation of young doctors from all over Indonesia the medical care of the people of East

Timor's most remote areas is guaranteed.

Another progressive development has to be mentioned, i.e. cost-free medical treatment and medicine at no charge. Again I would like to present some statistical data, a comparison of East Timor's health sector from the year 1975 until the year 1985:

- Central General Hospital:	From 1 remains 1.
- District Hospital:	From 2 remains 2.
- Public Health Center:	From 11 to 29.
- TB Hospital:	From 1 to 0. ^{x)}
- Military Hospital:	From 1 to 2.
- Private Hospital:	From 1 to 0.
- Smaller Public Health Center:	From 25 to 17.
- Private and Government Health Treatment Hall:	From 13 to 57.
- Health Service Posts:	From 0 to 150.
- Family Planning Clinic:	From 0 to 50.
- District Pharmaceutical Store:	From 1 to 4.
- Private and Government Dispensary:	From 0 to 3.
- Health Laboratory:	From 0 to 1.
- DDT Store:	From 0 to 9.
- Mobile Public Health Center:	From 0 to 48.
- Drug and Food Research Laboratory:	From 0 to 1.
- Mother and Child Health Clinic:	From 0 to 4.

2. Number of Population in East Timor (1985): 608.400.
East Timor covers an area of 14.619 square km.
Density of Population: 42 per square km.
Number of medical doctors (70), dentists (12)
total 82.
Ratio between number of doctors and population is
1 to 7.400.

x) (Eradication of TB disease is conducted at the public health centers.)

Malaria imposes another problem for East Timor. It still endangers the population even though the number of malaria incidents could be decreased. Despite these efforts this problem can hardly be solved within a short time.

Finally I would like to clear some "misunderstandings", i.e. accusations which were made in the Western world towards Indonesia. Most probably they stem from circles of those people who immigrated to Portugal or via Portugal to Australia after the Indonesian had taken over power after the civil war. For sure, these people have suffered a lot; the Indonesian army might also have contributed in part to their sufferings. In this respect it can be understood that they have interpreted East Timor's development in a more pessimistic manner than it actually has been. Before "condemning" their point of view it should be taken into consideration that they most probably complained simply because they were concerned about the East Timorese's well-being.

However, I would like to clear two issues:

- 1) Father Locateli is claimed to have been killed by the Indonesian military on his way to his rectory in August 1985 because he was supposed to be an opponent of Indonesia.

Father Locateli still lives and is extremely active in respect to contribute to the country's development. Certainly, he is one of the most known popular figures in East Timor. Despite some different points of view, which are unavoidable and need to be discussed, Father Locateli has no difficulties at all with Dili's administration.

- 2) The Camp on Atauro Island:

I made a surprise visit at this camp. Nothing had been prepared. We were not expected at all. Formerly, 3.000 people lived in this camp, nowadays

their number totals 928 persons. They had been evacuated from the central island because they lived in areas which were controlled by Fretilin and their security could not be guaranteed sufficiently. This year the rest of the people will be resettled in their former villages in East Timor because the area is safe now. They will move into their old villages which are reconstructed with the support of the Government.

At Atauro's camp I have seen no signs of underdevelopment, neither of malnutrition nor of insufficient medical care. The children who live in the camp attend Atauro's school together with the children of the village. All of them are taught in religion by one priest. The camp is not surrounded by an electric fence. There are not even signs of demarcation. The villagers as well as the camp occupants can move freely. You would not know where the village ends and the camp begins unless you were told so. However, the majority of the camp occupants want to return to their former villages according to a statement of the priest. The Secretary of the Timorese local government ensured that all camp occupants will be sent back this year. I think there should be no "difficulties at all in understanding the interpretation"!

East Timor should remain with Indonesia. This would be the most intelligent decision. Indonesia has to continue its educational and development efforts to gain the East Timorese's sympathy. It will probably take ten years until this process could be successfully achieved. In this case the army plays an important role.

Dili is no sleepy but rather a vivid city, more vivid than in 1973. You can walk along Dili's streets any time. It is safer than in Jakarta! The Timorese are open-minded and interested in talking to foreigners especially in order to practise their English. I did not have the impression that they are shy or

afraid. They are open-minded and also interested in political subjects. However, the Timorese still prefer Europe to Indonesia. Also, they think of Portugal in nostalgia even though they do not know anything about the real political and social situation in this Western country.

However, I have the impression that the Timorese are well aware of the importance of their future and that they are willing to contribute towards its development. In this respect patience and good will are necessary rather than weapons and security because only peaceful means can help the East Timorese to overcome their sufferings and to be open for cooperation in development programs. There is no reason for Indonesia to hide its achievements. Thus, I suggested the Indonesian Government in Jakarta to permit entry to a West German television team next summer, so that the West German population can be informed about East Timor, its development and the achievements which have been made there.

In regard to the above mentioned impression which I have gained during my recent visit to East Timor I would like to advise social organizations and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to support East Timor with development aid. It would be worthwhile. A scholarship for post-graduate studies for example would be one means of helping the Timorese to take care of the administration and the well-being of their people. The people of the other Indonesian provinces are already capable to do so.

East Timor's independence is impossible because this island is not in the position to supply itself independently. In what kind of dependence an "independent" East Timor would slide into remains a question. East Timor is an island which is predominantly Christian. In this respect a liberal development in East Timor can not be achieved through a Marxist doctrine!

However, according to my view the Central Government and the Army in Jakarta might face difficulties in this respect. But I am optimistic. They will be successful. I felt more reassured after having returned from Dili.